

Out to Sea

by When The Tide Comes In

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1. Out to Sea

push me out to sea on a little boat that you made
>out of the evergreen, that you helped your father cut away

>leave me on the tracks to wait until the morning train
arrives
>don't you dare look back, walk away
>catch up with the sunrise.

;;

Lewis absently traced patterns down the slope of Rikki's bare back with his index finger, his mind anywhere else but in the unsettling quiet of his bedroom. He squinted in the darkness, attempting to make out the vague outline of his door for no other reason than to focus on something other than the guilt that was making him sick with self loathing. Lewis knew this was wrong. Cleo deserved so much better than his unfaithfulness. He knew just how deeply how her feelings for him ran.

He knew this made him no better than his father. The thought made him physically ill.

throw me in the landfill.

Rikki was splayed across his chest, her head a solid weight against

his heart. There were few things Lewis liked more than how the weight of her body felt against his; warm and heavy and sated. She was running her fingers curiously along his collarbone, slick with perspiration and already beginning to darken and bruise from where she'd kissed and bit. He winced as she pressed down a little too roughly, but leant up into the sharp ache anyway. It wasn't a secret to anyone but himself that Lewis was a masochist.

Of course, it wasn't any secret that Rikki was too.

throw me in the dirt pit.

Lewis turned his head away from the door so he could bury his nose in Rikki's rampant, thoroughly disordered curls. They were soft against his face and smelt like mango shampoo. Sharp and sweet and exotic, Lewis though the fragrance fit Rikki well. He pressed a soft kiss to her temple, unable to pry the _I'm Sorry_ from the back of his throat. He could just make out Rikki looking up at him, her face a blurred but familiar shape in the darkness. She kissed the side of his mouth tenderly and Lewis could've sworn he felt his ribs splinter beneath her delicate hand and impale his heart.

It was easier to communicate this way, through gentle and not-so-gentle touches. Neither of them were very good with words anyway. Lewis always seemed to talk too much, and Rikki almost never got the chance to say enough.

(bad with words, but good with their mouths.)

throw me in the water.

It was raining again. The third night in a row this week.

Lewis was starting to doze off now, the sound of the rain slowly lulling him to sleep. It was one of the few things him and Rikki had in common, their love of the rain-thunderstorms, more accurately. Rikki came to notice that, whenever a thunderstorm would roll in, Lewis would sometimes get this_ look_ on his face. She'd been at the cafe, back when it was still The JuiceNet, with Emma and Cleo the first time she ever caught a glimpse of it. It was during a bone chillingly loud crack of thunder that the lights flickered, and Lewis had beamed. His smile had been almost as bright as the lightning, and it, along with his eyes, held a certain mischievousness that she wasn't used to seeing in him. It was as though he were just as charged full of fire as the storm itself.

She knew now that Lewis was.

leave me at the altar.

Rikki knew her dad was going to be pissed when she got home tomorrow, assuming the rain stopped by then. He'd be waiting in the kitchen for her when she crept back into the house, her clothes disheveled and makeup worn and smeared. It wasn't hard to tell where she'd been. Terry would get it over, though. For now Rikki was content to stay where she was, secretly enjoying the way Lewis's chest rose and fell with each breath he took. It wouldn't be long before he grew restless, though. He'd toss and turn and make distressed expressions, occasionally mumbling beneath his breath words Rikki couldn't quite make out. She'd wanted to ask him on more than one occasion if he had

bad dreams, or perhaps bad memories, but soon decided against it. If Lewis ever asked her about her bad dreams, she'd probably punch him in the face.

Some stories are better off left untold.

By the time dawn broke the next morning, Rikki was gone.

Lewis didn't expect her to stay. She usually never did, not unless it was too wet outside for her to walk home, but somehow it still managed to sting when he opened his eyes and found the other side of the bed empty and cold. With a sigh, Lewis rolled over and grabbed his phone from its place on his nightstand. Before he could check the time the phone lit up in his hands and a picture of Cleo, smiling like the first day they'd met, showed up. A fresh wave of guilt washed over him as his finger hovered over the 'answer' button.

Lewis swallowed the bile in the back of his throat.

"Hello?"

"Morning Lewis!" Cleo chirped happily. Her voice made his chest tight. "You're still meeting us at Mako today, right? Will needs to know how much stuff to pack."

"Yeah," He breathed, wiping the sleep from his eyes. "Wouldn't miss it for the world. I'll meet your girls at the cafe in twenty minutes or so. Sound okay?"

"Sounds perfect!"

His phone beeped twice, letting him know the call had ended.

Lewis dragged himself out of bed and pulled on some clothes. He dreaded the day ahead. It was getting harder and harder to look Rikki and Cleo both in the eye, not to mention Zane. Rikki seemed to be avoiding his gaze more often than not these days, too. He hoped, more than anything, they hadn't destroyed their friendship in the process of trying to rid the smoldering ache of loneliness and longing festering within the both of them.

When Lewis got to the cafe Cleo greeted him with a kiss and an over enthusiastic hug. Behind the two of them, Rikki flashed Lewis a somber, knowing smile. One that said we'll figure it out, eventually.

Lewis had his doubts, but he smiled anyway.

Outside, thunder rumbled.

push me out to sea.

2. Youth

if you're still breathing, you're the lucky one
>*cause most of us are heaving through corrupted lungs.*

>*setting fire to our insides for fun, collecting names of the lovers*

>that went wrong, the lovers that went wrong.

; ;

It was beautiful outside. The sky was a brilliant, cloudless blue and the wind coming in from off the ocean was gentle and briny and warm. The day, it seemed, was going to be absolutely perfect, not to mention it wasn't scorching hot for once.

Rikki hated it. She hated the day's sunshine and warmth.

(today it was a downpour of rain she yearned for.)

She watched Lewis from her place behind the counter, flustered with herself for being so engrossed in what he was doing. In the last few weeks Lewis had become a more or less permanent fixture in Bella's band, and watching him now, watching as he lost himself in the rhythm in the music, Rikki couldn't help but think back to the day Bella had first wowed them with her voice. It had also been the day Cleo shoved Lewis up on the stage with Bella despite his protests.

For someone who hadn't played the drums since they were ten, he was damn good at it. Before that moment, Rikki never knew Lewis played an instrument.

But of course, that was just Lewis. He always did have a habit of surprising you when you least expect it.

we are the reckless, we are the wild youth
>chasing visions of our futures, one day we'll reveal the truth
>that one will die before he gets there.

Cleo and Lewis have a date at seven o' clock and Rikki tries not to feel too pathetically jealous.

It wasn't like she wanted to date him, because that'd be awkward and weird. Rikki didn't do the whole wine and dine date thing anyway, which was one of the reasons she was still with Zane. Not to mention Rikki knew Lewis well enough to understand why they'd never be compatible. Lewis had a protective, possessive streak that ran soul deep and she just couldn't handle that. She had to have room to breathe, had to have someone understand that she didn't need anyone but herself to keep her safe. Lewis was also just as selfless as he was reckless, which wasn't necessarily a bad thing, but Rikki often wondered if he had some sort of death wish. Because, honestly, who else wound spend their time with a bunch of mermaids? Lewis had put himself in harm's way on more occasions than she could count for her, Cleo, and Emma.

(and if anything ever happened to him, she doubted she could take the guilt.)

Rikki hadn't been lounging in the Moon Pool for more than an hour and half when she heard the familiar sound of rock crumbling and footsteps echoing.

"Whoever is it," She groused, not bothering to open her eyes. She was still floating on her back and heating the water around her, trying desperately to relax. To stop thinking. "Scram. Some of us

are trying to relax."

"Rude." Came a familiar, half-joking voice.

Rikki opened her eyes and knitted her eyebrows together in confusion.

"Lewis?" She asked. "Aren't you and Cleo supposed to be doing something?"

He shrugged. "I canceled."

"Why?"

"Just needed time to think, I guess."

"Join the club."

Silence stretched out between them and Rikki hoped Lewis couldn't hear the wild hammer of her heart.

"Want me to go?" He finally asked.

"Yeah." She responded. Her voice came out quieter than she'd intended.

Lewis nodded. "I'll see you around then."

On that note he wordlessly left, leaving Rikki back to her lonesome. She exhaled a nervous breath she hadn't realized she was holding and pressed her thumb deeply against the hickey Lewis left on her left hip, craving the ache.

She let herself sink beneath the water.

and if you're still bleeding, you're the lucky one
>cause most of our feelings, they are dead and they are gone

>we're setting fire to our insides for fun, collecting pictures from the flood

> that wrecked our home, it was a flood that wrecked this home.

Rikki knocks on Lewis's door at ten o' clock the next night.

He tiredly answered the door in a pair of gray sweatpants and Rikki was kissing his mouth before he had the chance to formulate a greeting. She didn't want to think anymore. She was so fucking sick of thinking and pondering and wondering she could scream, so she just shoved Lewis back until he fell on the couch and straddled his hips.

"We're so bad for each other." He said when she finally gave him the chance.

Rikki nipped at the column of his throat. "I know. I don't care."

And Rikki didn't care that Lewis was bad for her, that they were bad for each other, because she was eighteen years old and she felt

restless and lonely and confused. She was _obligated _to make some bad choices. She didn't know where life was taking her, and all _she did know_ was that her and Zane would never be married with two kids and a dog and a lovely little house in the city. Hell, her and Zane probably wouldn't make it another month. Rikki felt endlessly broken in so many places and impossibly solid and unwavering in others. It made her head spin and chest hurt.

(and at almost nineteen years old, lewis felt the same way.
)

"Fuckin' pants." She muttered, tugging at the band of Lewis's sweatpants.

He chuckled against her collarbone. "So impatient."

"Your stupid pretty _face _is impatient."

Rikki kissed Lewis's mouth again. He tasted like heat, nicotine, and misery.

and if you're in love then you are the lucky one
>cause most of us are bitter over someone
>setting fire to our insides for fun, to distract our hearts from

>ever missing them, but i'm forever missing him.

3. In The Shallows

let the water rise, let the ground crack
>let me fall inside, lying on my back.

; ;

"We should do something."

"What?"

"Just you, me, and Bella. C'mon Cleo, let's get out of the Gold Coast for a while."

Cleo chuckled, more than a little confused. "Rikki, wait. I'm confused. You want to leave the Gold Coast?"

"Just for a few days. We could get a hotel up in Sydney or something. Go shopping. I don't know. I'm just..." Rikki sighed and looked down at her juice. "I need to get away for a little while, ya' know? I need a break."

"Is everything okay?" Cleo asked, eyebrows knitted together in concern.

Yeah, I fucked your boyfriend last night. It wasn't the first time either. She wanted to say.

"Yeah, I'm fine." She says instead. "Just a little overstressed with work and school. C'mon, you know it'll be fun. A girls' weekend."

"O...kay. Let me go grab Bella and make sure she's free. We could leave in the morning?"

Rikki forced a smile. "Yeah, that sounds great!"

Cleo smiled too, a little brittlely, and slid off her barstool to go get Bella.

Rikki wasn't particularly in the mood for a three or four day shopping excursion, but she was desperate to get away from Lewis. It wasn't like he was seeking her out, in fact it was quite the opposite, but it was nearly impossible to go a day without seeing him. If he wasn't with Cleo and Bella, he was with Zane, and if he wasn't with Zane he was helping Will with something. Him and Rikki were caught in the same web of friends, and whether they liked it or not they'd always be forced into one another. It wasn't as though they were fighting, or they didn't want to be with one another, it was just that the guilt was often too much to bear.

Cleo and Bella and Zane were thankfully still oblivious to her and Lewis's subtle changes in behavior, but Will... Rikki was starting to think he suspected something between them. There was something about the way Will looked at the two of them when they were near each other that set Rikki on edge.

Were they that obvious?

_dry your smoke-stung eyes, so you can see the light
>_staring at the sky, watching stars collide
>_if you leave when i go, you'll find me in the
shallows._

"Lewis? What are you doing out here at," Will looked down at his waterproof watch. "Two o' clock in the morning?"

Lewis shrugged. "I come out here to think sometimes. Don't tell the girls, though. I don't need Cleo drilling me about being safe again. It's a deserted island. I think I can handle myself." He was silent for a moment. "What are you doing out here?"

"I couldn't sleep. Figured I'd go on a night dive and get some fresh air." Will paused, unsure whether or not to press the issue. Why did Lewis feel that he had to escape to Mako Island in the dead of night? The moon wasn't even full. It was just a silver, and it was far too cloudy for him to be stargazing. What could he possibly be thinking about?

Will cleared his throat awkwardly. "Ugh, I didn't know you smoked."

Again Lewis shrugged, although this time he turned his gaze away from the sea and toward Will. "You want me to put it out?"

"You should. You know that isn't good for you, right?"

Lewis chuckled dryly and took another drag. "I like a lot of things that aren't good for me."

"Are you... okay?"

"I'm alive. That sounds pretty okay to me. A lot of people don't make it nineteen."

Will was starting to get worried now. Lewis was acting strange. Well, stranger than normal.

"We should head back to the mainland, Lewis. Cleo probably had a point. Who knows what's out here. I mean, the animals aloneâ€|"

"I'm not going to off myself, if that's what you're thinking." Lewis said.

"What?"

"I said I'm not going to off myself. I'm fine. Like I said, I come out here to think a lot. You can leave me alone. You won't find my corpse floating in the water like some Opheliac in the morning."

Will didn't know what to say, so he didn't say a thing. Instead he sat down next to Lewis in the sand and focused on the tide rolling in and rolling out, rolling in out and rolling out, rolling in, rolling out...

"I don't smoke that often," Lewis finally said. "Just when shit hits the fan. It's a bad habit, I know."

"What happened?" Will asked.

"I'm pretty sure I've lost all my self control."

Neither of them looked away from the ocean.

when the time comes on the last day, when they start to come down

>will you just, will you run away?
>let it all rain down from the blood stained clouds

>come out, to the sea my love
>and just drown with me.

The text on Lewis's phone _read me & cleo & bella are going to sydney for the weekend_.

He quickly texted back _i know_ and returned to his paper. He had another four pages to write, not to mention an ungodly amount of sources to cite, before Monday afternoon.

_oh, cleo tell you? _Came a reply.

Lewis was too tired to deal with this tonight. He just wanted to lose himself in his paper and forget about the rest of the world for awhile, Rikki included.

yeah. be careful. i'll see guys monday or tuesday?

It was another five or ten minutes before Lewis heard back from Rikki.

you'll see me now. i'm outside your door.

Lewis closed his eyes, heart dropping suddenly to his stomach. One night. That was all he asked. One night of peace. One night without being drowned in guilt. Reluctantly, Lewis got up and went to open the door, and sure enough there Rikki stood. Only this time she didn't rush into his arms and attack him with fervent kisses. She just stepped forward and wrapped her arms around his waist.

"Can I sleep here tonight? It's a shorter walk to Cleo's in the morning, anyway."

"Of course." Lewis breathed.

Abandoning his paper, him and Rikki curled up in the middle of his bed until they both began to drift into a fitful sleep.

"You smell like smoke." Rikki said quietly.

Lewis smiled softly, just a slight twitch of the lips. "You look like fire."

_if you leave when i go
>_you'll find me in the shallows._

* * *

><p>an**: dedicated to mermaidbyheart. ily bby. x

4. Terrible Love

_it's a terrible love a__nd i'm walking with spiders_
>it's a terrible love and i'm walking in i_t's quiet company.

—

;;

Rikki had planned on leaving before Lewis woke up, especially since their night together had been unusually innocent and there wasn't any shameful redressing in the dark to dread, but when dawn broke she couldn't bring herself to leave the warmth of his bed. Instead she laid there silently next to him, her eyes tracing over the smooth dips and contours of his shoulder blades and across the faded scar on the back of his neck (from a diving accident, he'd told her once). This was a familiar routine, watching Lewis sleep. At this point she knew his body almost as well as he did—every scratch, every scar, every bruise, every pit or dip in his skin had been burned permanently onto the back of her eyelids.

"Hey you." Rikki greeted when Lewis's eyes finally fluttered open.

"Hey." He replied tiredly. "Shouldn't you be on your way to Cleo's?"

"Trying to get me out of bed already?" Rikki teased.

Lewis grinned half-heartedly. "M'wouldn't dream of it."

She leaned over to kiss him both good morning and goodbye. It was

hotter and deeper and slower than the peck she'd originally intended it to be, and when one of Lewis's hand skimmed up her arm to tangle itself in her hair Rikki knew there was no way she was going to make it to Cleo's on time. Her conscience scalded and screamed at her to push Lewis's gentle hand away and leap out of his bed, the bed of her best friend's boyfriend, but Lewis's mouth was fervent and wet and trailing down the side of her neck now and oh, she could let those lips glide across her skin forever.

(the things lewis could do with his mouth, rikki decided, made up for whatever other faults he had.)

and I can't fall asleep without a little help
>it takes awhile to settle down my shivered bones
>wait till the panics out.

"Finally!" Cleo exclaimed when Rikki walked briskly through the Sertori's front door. "We thought you'd been kidnapped or something."

"Sorry," Rikki replied smoothly, the lie she'd formulated on the walk over already on the tip of her tongue. "My alarm didn't go off this morning and I overslept."

Bella smirked. "Well, as long as you weren't kidnapped.
Again."

Rikki rolled her eyes playfully. "One time, and it was totally Sophie's fault."

"So!" Cleo chirped brightly, bringing her hands together in an excited clap. "Are we ready to go? We've got everything we need, right?"

"You bet." Rikki said, shouldering her backpack of clothes. Her and Bella and Cleo had decided on packing light, just the bare essentials, since they not only were they going to be staying for a short two or three days, but they'd probably end up buying and bringing back more than they brought in the first place.

"We're getting something to eat before we hit the highway, right?" Bella asked, and Rikki laughed for the first time in what felt like years.

Maybe this wouldn't be such a bad trip after all.

it takes an ocean not to break _
>it's quite a company.

"Will, are you stalking me?"

"No! I just, ughâ€|" Will shyly rubbed at the back of his neck. "I'm worried about you, okay? You've been acting really strange lately. I thought since the girls are gone we could, I don't know, talk?"

Lewis groaned. "I told you I'm fine, Will. A hundred times now."

"But you're not!" Will insisted, frustrated with his friend(he was

pretty sure they were friends, anyway)'s stubbornness. "And you're smoking again!"

He snatched the cigarette from between Lewis's fingertips and put it out on the toe of his shoe.

"_Rude_." Lewis snarked. "Cigarettes aren't cheap, ya' know."

"Don't try and change the subject." Will continued. He sat down in the sand next to Lewis with a sigh, his voice softening. "Look, it's obvious something is going on with you and bottling it up isn't healthy."

Lewis thought for a moment, unsure of how to word what he was wanting to say. After a few moments of contemplation he gave up and settled with "It's hard to explain, Will. It's a long complicated story and I don't have the slightest idea where to begin."

Will shrugged. "I've got time. I'm hiding from Sophie anyway."

Lewis chuckled at that, though the light of it didn't quite reach his eyes. "You're not going to give up until I spill my guts, are you?"

"Pretty much."

"Well, then it's a good thing you're so persistent."

Will laughed and gazed out across the horizon. He'd get it out of Lewis eventually, but for now he was content to sit on the shore of Mako Island and listen to the waves break against the coast. In the distance lightning flashed, striking down to meet the sea, and out of the corner of his eye Will saw Lewis smile.

Neither of them bothered heading back to the mainland until it began to pour down rain.

and i won't follow you into the rabbit hole
>i said i would but then i saw your shivered bones

>they didn't want me to.

Nine hours into their drive and Cleo finally gave into Bella and Rikki's relentless begging that they find a hotel for the night. Cleo had been insistent on making it to Sydney in one drive, but Bella and Rikki were complaining about stiff necks and stiff legs and Bella said if she didn't have a shower soon she was pretty sure she was going to crawl out of her skin. So, with a defeated sigh, Cleo drove another twenty minutes to the nearest hotel and booked them a room for the night.

"Oh thank God,_ __" _Rikki said, dropping her bag onto the little table by the window and flopping face-first onto the nearest bed. "I'm going to sleep for the next ten years."

"I'm guessing that bed is yours now?" Bella teased.

"Damn straight! I'm not moving from this spot for the rest of the night. Nine hours in a car, oh my _God_."

Cleo and Bella both laughed, then Cleo said "Don't worry, I'm sharing with Bella. If I recall right, Rikki, the last time we shared a beat you kicked the crap out of me in your sleep."

Rikki rolled over onto her back. "What can I say? I'm a rough sleeper."

"You're something all right." Bella added as she headed for the bathroom. "If anyone needs to use the bathroom, I'm leaving the door unlocked. But seriously, I've got to shower."

"I should probably wash my makeup off." Cleo commented, following Bella into the bathroom.

Rikki made a vague noise of agreement and flipped on the telly, glad she was finally able to stretch her legs and relax. It was going to be another long drive tomorrow, but at least by this time then they'd all be in Sydney. Until then, though, Rikki was quite content to lounge where she currently rested. The guilt of her morning affair with Lewis didn't return to haunt her until Bella and Cleo had turned off the telly and settled in for the night. Rikki almost wished Cleo had volunteered to share with her instead of Bella.

She was really starting to hate sleeping alone.

it takes an ocean not to break.

* * *

><p>an:**i hope you guys aren't looking for a plot because this has officially become my rikki/lewis dumpsite, although all these onehots are set in the same verse (the morning bled' verse, for anyone curious). i don't even know what i'm doing anymore, tbh. whoops. enjoy the word vomit anyway. x

End
file.